My Lord and Savior Jesus Christ

J. Frank Hanly

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My Lord and Savior Jesus Christ

By J. Frank Hanly

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I HAVE been requested by the managers of the convention to make an appeal to you for the study of the Holy Scriptures. The limited time allotted me precludes consideration of them as a whole and compels special selection.

I have chosen their Great Central Figure —the Great Central Figure of all time,— and shall speak of Him, believing that He of all the characters found in them will most incite desire in you to know them, and more than all others will impel you to their study; and in the hope that in their study you may come to know *Him,* whom to know aright is life eternal.

For ten years I have had in my mind and purpose the preparation of a lecture concerning Him. In that time I have read many books, heard many lectures and lis-

tened to many sermons of which He was the subject or the theme, and have gleaned in many fields and delved into many mines. And now I bring you an epitome of what I have read and heard and of my own best thought concerning one phase of a single question pertaining to Him the primal, master question—"Was He mortal, or is He divine?"

In presenting the subject I omit from the argument almost entirely the fact of His immaculate conception;—the fact of His miraculous birth;—the fact of His resurrection;—the fact of His ascension, and the miracles He performed; and confine myself to a consideration of His personality—the effect of His gospel and the results of His ministry and life.

I do not claim originality for much I bring you. There is in it little new. Some-

times only the thread that binds the parts together is mine.

The thoughts I present are still wet with the dew of other minds. The fragrance of many great souls still lingers about them. In assembling them and preparing them in somewhat new form I have been greatly blessed, and I give them now to you in the hope that there are blessings in them still.

BIRTH

IN a conquered province of the Roman Empire, held by the iron hand of military power; when the oppressor's yoke was grievous and hard to bear; when the spirit of a once proud nation was subdued and broken and its hopes dissipated; in the days of a great people's sorest trial and travail; at a time when they were least worthy, either in thought or in action; when hypocrisy and sensuality were dominant vices in the character of both the conquerors and the conquered;—to a woman and a man of lowliest station, living in the most despised subdivision of that conquered province and in the meanest city of that despised subdivision, a city of opprobrious name, from which no good had ever come, and from which none was expected; in an outbuilding in the little city of Bethlehem; to the

Virgin Mary and to Joseph, the carpenter of Nazareth in Galilee, a district of Palestine; in the days of Herod the Great and of Augustus Cæsar,—a *man-child was born, and they called His name Jesus.*

DESTINY

HIS life was to be brief,—but thirty-three years from the Manger to the Cross,—and for the most part obscure. An exile in childhood, He was to be cut off in the flush of His manhood as a malefactor, suffering the indignity of an ignominious execution. *He was born a Jew,—despised, obscure, ignoble;* yet He was to be immortal among men.

The Cæsars did not know it, but He was destined to outlive the last of that great name. He was to found a kingdom that would survive the mighty empire over which they ruled and which was to be infinitely greater in its extent. He was to acquire fame that would endure when Rome's stateliest monuments and costliest

palaces should become dust. He was to be loved and worshipped when the proudest name in all the history of that imperial city should cease to be even so much as a reminiscence.

All men were to become His subjects. He was to become the conqueror of the world. Yet He was never to command an army, to storm a fortress, or to lead a charge. His triumph was not to come through the brutality of militarism. *He was to spill no blood.* Violence was to have no place in the establishment of His dominion. *He was to conquer through the purity, the gentleness, the goodness, the self-denial, the abnegation and the sheer moral worth and dignity of His character.* His empire was to be founded by sacrifice, but the sacrifice was to be *His own life. Only His own blood was to be shed.* The *quality* of *His soul* was to be His only weapon. But

with it He was to destroy paganism and reclaim the heathen. He was to overthrow idolatry and civilize the barbarian. He was to absorb philosophy, to set free the bondman and to clothe the slave with the costly vesture of civil liberty. He was to make known the infinite mercy and protecting fatherhood of God. He was to establish the universal brotherhood of man and to infuse into his life "the peace that passeth understanding." Through the Garden and the Cross, He was to redeem the human race and win immortality, not for Himself alone, but for all the sons of men. He was to reveal the hidden relations of life and to solve the mysteries of death and the tomb. He, Himself, was to become the *resurrection and the life*. Through Him whosoever would throughout all the centuries was to have life eternal. Through Him men were to be enabled to rise supreme in the agony of

death, and in the hour and article of dissolution were to be able to cry with shouts of triumph,

"O grave, where is thy victory;
O death, where is thy sting?"

TIMES AND ENVIRONMENT

HIS life on earth, with the exception of His exile in childhood, was confined to Palestine—a little country forty-five miles wide by one hundred forty-five miles in length; seven times less in area than the state of Ohio. The East and West had not then met. They were still latched, unknown worlds. Space was triumphant. Science had not yet bridged the seas nor laid her scepter on the stars. Man's loudest cry could not be heard beyond his own doorway. His farthest-flung frontier did not outrun the wanderings of his unaided feet. There were no railroads traversing the continents; no steamships ploughing the seas. There were no telegraphs, no telephones, no wireless telegraphy, no means of communication or intercourse between nations or between sections of the same coun-

try except by messenger or courier, through long, slow and fatiguing journeys. Each nation and each community lived unto itself to a degree to us unknown and unimaginable. Even the art of printing was a sealed mystery.

He possessed neither name, nor wealth, nor place, nor influence. His father was only a tradesman—a Nazarene carpenter. His immediate kin were inconspicuous, inconsequential and uninfluential. He was without privilege. He had neither training nor education other than that which came to Him through the natural evolution of His own faculties.

He went mostly among the common people, ate with publicans and sinners and dwelt among the humble. He spent many days of His brief ministry upon the highways and in the fields; rested at public wells; walked by the sea; journeyed to the wilder-

ness; tarried much among the mountains, and sheltered not infrequently beneath the trees. He knew the solitudes of the hills better than the halls of state, and the valleys and gardens of the country better than He knew the temples of the city or the palaces of the great. In material possessions He was poor—poorer than the birds or foxes. They had nests and holes. But He had not where to lay His head. When He died His sole estate was a single seamless garment.

THE MIRACLE OF HIS SURVIVAL

HOW impossible it seems that one born of such a parentage, in such a land, of such a race, amid such an environment and in such times as this nameless, homeless, placeless Jew, should, in three brief years of teaching and ministry, set in motion moral tides that should sweep all peoples, change the laws of all nations and overturn the altars of all religions. And how unbelievable that such an one, writing no word and speaking only to ignorant fishermen who could remember but little of what He said, should acquire a fame that should obscure the geniuses of all times, draw in His train the inhabitants of all lands and the peoples of all ages, and *link with Himself all human hopes and destinies.* From a human standpoint it is incredible,

absolutely and utterly incredible. It contradicts all human experience and contravenes all human possibilities. Even in our day of knowledge and enlightenment; of rapid transit and instant communication and of wide diffusion of information by means of a many-tongued and vibrant press—a day in which science and invention have drawn with magic hands the four corners of the universe into one, when man's veriest whisper can be heard beneath the seas and among the clouds of the most distant lands—only an infinitesimal few—one or two, perhaps, in half a thousand million—are able to achieve world renown. The lapse of a hundred years suffices to veil the most illustrious in more or less obscurity to all men and not infrequently in absolute oblivion so far as the multitudes are concerned. There are not six men now living; there were not six in the last century; no, there are scarcely six men in all the his-

tory of the race whose names are known to the masses of the people throughout the earth.

Even the benefactors of the race who *are* known are soon forgotten. Neither marble nor bronze; nor brush nor chisel; not the "art preservative" itself, can perpetuate their memories or make known their deeds, or even their names, to the passing, succeeding multitudes.

Only this son of the lowly Nazarene carpenter—this *manger-child*—has been able to triumph over oblivion. The miracle of survival is His and His alone. He alone of all the great who have lived and wrought has achieved enduring, universal fame. Only *His* name is so engraved on the forefront of the oncoming centuries that it cannot be forgotten. He alone is loved, adored and worshipped—loved, adored and worshipped everywhere—in America, in Eu-

rope, in Australia, in Africa, in the gray-haired East, and in the farthest islands of the seas.

As a man He never traveled beyond the narrow boundaries of the land in which He was born, but somehow His influence has diffused itself with subtle, mysterious power throughout all lands and into all places. Time, relentless in its march, inexorable in its processes, has piled more than nineteen hundred years between the people of the present age and the scene of His crucifixion and the hour of His death, and has crowded them with human incident without number and with human endeavor and achievement of race-wide interest and import, covering with oblivion and making all but nameless every actor in the unending drama, but *His fame* it has only *emblazoned, His name* it has only *glorified.*

OMNISCIENT PERSONALITY

HE is omnipresent and omniscient. To satisfy ourselves of His omnipresence and of His omniscience we have only to note His influence upon human thought, institutions and affairs.

To illustrate:

NOT A PHYSICIAN

HE was not a physician. We are not advised that He had any special knowledge of either disease or medicine. Yet He cured the sick; cleansed the unclean; made the maimed whole; caused the halt to leap, the deaf to hear, the blind to see, and the dead to rise and walk.

Physically absent, He no longer performs these miracles among us.

But the memory of Gethsemane and of Golgatha, of the mysterious struggle beneath the olive trees with its supreme and final consecration, and of the death-agony on the cross-crowned crest of Calvary, brings to them who believe in Him and who know and love Him that which is infinitely better than medicine or physical ministration—*courage to "bear the toil"; strength to "endure the pain" until life's measure shall be filled.*

NOT A LAWYER

HE was not a lawyer. But He knew the law—the principles that abide; and the prophets were His familiars. He loved justice for its own sake and adjudged the erring with compassion. Witness, His decree pronounced against the scarlet woman—"Go and sin no more." Morality and absolute right He sought to make the law's enduring cornerstones.

With the passing years the principles He declared are finding lodgment, more and more, in the hearts and minds of men. They are becoming the basis and are entering into the letter and spirit of the law of every land and between all nations. Statutes are builded and constitutions founded upon them. Before them cruel and inhuman punishments are giving way, death penalties are being abolished, children are no more hanged for

petty theft, fair dealing for the weak is being demanded and rightful relations among men established. He is no longer a stranger to the court-room or the bench. All judgment seats are becoming His. Himself the victim of the most cruel and criminal miscarriage of justice the world ever knew, He has set in motion influences that will yet strip the ermine from the unjust judges of all the earth and lift the law above the reach of might or hate.

NOT AN AUTHOR

HE was not an author. He wrote, so far as we know, no word in all His life, other than a single line, and that was written in the dust of the ground and disappeared within the hour of its writing. No letter of it was preserved. We have from His pen no line, no word, not even a syllable.

But the gospel He preached, though abiding for years only in the imperfect memories of illiterate fishermen, and then written out by them in incomplete and imperfect fragments, has survived the vicissitudes and cataclysms of the centuries. It is ours to-day, even as they wrote it.

The successful author of this, the most favored age of the world's history, is able to reach but comparatively few of the world's population. If his work is of unusual merit

and exceptional worth, he may be able to secure its translation into and its publication in a few languages other than his own. But even then he is fortunate if he obtains for it a circulation of half a million copies. And if, of his best production, he is able to get into circulation a thousand editions, he reaches the pinnacle of literary success. But how different it has been with the gospel of the betrayed, condemned and crucified Christ. *It* has been translated into more than five hundred tongues, languages and dialects. It has reached more editions than man can number. Countless copies have been in circulation for centuries. It is the oldest of printed volumes. And yet, old as it is, wide as its distribution has been, its circulation is constantly increasing, aggregating last year more than sixteen million copies. The most signal triumph in profane literature of immediate times is a story of

Him, a romance written to demonstrate His divinity. A book that does not have something of Him or His gospel in it does not survive the hour of its publication. It goes unread into the dead literatures of the world to remain forever inert and voiceless.

From the day of His crucifixion, He has had a part in all literature, in all story, in all history and in all song.

NOT AN ORATOR

HE was not widely known as an orator. To the learned and cultured—the men of letters—of His time He was but a "babbler." "Having never learned," He was held illiterate as a matter of course. His discourses drew only the common people. These alone He swept in His train. Of them only were His disciples constituted.

But these discourses, then despised, and spoken in out-of-the-way places, by the seaside and country roadsides, on hilltop and mountainside, in garden and in wheatfield, now hold primacy over all discourses that have been uttered, and are heard daily, in essence at least, in the halls and courts of all christendom.

We behold them everywhere, in forms of matchless power and faultless beauty—ham-

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mered into the flawless marble of stately obelisks, chiseled into the unyielding granite of awe-compelling monuments, wrought into the enduring bronze of tablets and of statues; in-written in the glass of the glorified windows of unnumbered churches, fashioned in priceless mosaics upon the walls of mighty temples and set in the arched and jeweled domes of stupendous cathedrals.

The foundations of the world's institutions rest upon them. The secret of immortal influence is in them—*the power of God unto salvation.* Before them the wicked fall, the righteous rise, and the wise and great are awed and humbled.

Their literary worth is incomparable. The rainbow threads of their simple, stainless beauty shine through the prism of the years with a glory that enthralls. Alive with moral truth, incarnate with naked fact,

they are singularly felicitous and persuasive. They are almost without adjective or descriptive epithet. Noun and verb seem actually stripped for action. And yet they abound with verbal grace and splendor. Accusation and denunciation are there, but they are mingled and interfibered with compassion and forgiveness.

They show keen insight into the mind and heart of all humanity. They grip the moral faculties of all. They speak to the elemental, universal soul. Simple and master minds; the mediocre and the genius, the illiterate and the learned, child and seer—all are within their catholic scope and matchless sweep.

As a thinker He was original, incisive and profound. Strength and fiber and integrity are always present. Man's guilt and need, and the Father's willingness to forgive; the "sinfulness of sin" and the "beauty of holi-

ness" are made clear with frank and simple directness.

He was master of the art of interrogation. No public speaker ever made such use of the interrogatory form of address. His discourses abound in questions, put with subtle understanding and dramatic power; questions that go to the mark with the swift certainty of an electric current; questions that startle the mind, transfix attention, fasten themselves upon the memory and compel and quicken thought; questions that disturb, embarrass and expose; *questions that alarm the conscience, pierce the soul and make the heart stand still,* touching the sensitive, unplumbed depths of mortal being.

In some of His discourses His very soul seems objectified—*pure as the lilies, fragrant as the flowers, serene and constant as the unfailing, everlasting stars.*

He knew every form and aptitude of human speech. Illustration and imagery, epigram and metaphor, parable and allegory, simile and symbol, cast in Oriental mould and phrase, enrich and adorn the diction of every address and light the way to lofty concepts of exalted themes; and all without poverty of thought or excess of ornament.

He understood every human passion and could have played at will *upon them all.* But He only spoke to the better angels of our nature. *The baser keys He would not touch.* Prejudice and hate, selfishness and avarice, pride, and desire for place or power were beneath His use. But charity and compassion, love and pity, justice and mercy, tenderness and courage, faith and hope, *are constellated in the very firmament of every utterance.*

He knew of man's universal desire to better his material condition, to get on in life;

of his longing for power and dominion over his fellows. But unlike the world's kings and conquerors, He offered him neither wealth nor increased income, place nor position, palace nor crown, nor "distinction's worthless badge." But He did offer him mercy, forgiveness and pardon—*mercy wide and boundless, forgiveness entire and complete, pardon full and free.* He offered him rest from the weary yoke of sin, solace for his wounds, comfort for his broken heart. He offered him the fatherhood of God; the kinship of universal brotherhood. He offered him the inheritance of "the pure in heart;" immortal, everlasting life; the heirship of "Fields Elysian." And unlike the kings and conquerors of the world, *He was to redeem His promises.* There were to be no disappointments; no Marston Moors, no Waterloos. Not one jot or one tittle of *His* word was to pass away unfulfilled.

In His discussions that have come down to us He always spoke upon exalted themes and dealt with elemental things—the unanswered questions of the centuries. The sovereignty of God, man's relation to the Infinite, his birth and destiny, the principles of life and death, were subjects which constantly employed His thought and engaged His speech. They ennobled His concepts, purified His diction and elevated His discourse.

The great orators of the world, when profoundly stirred, have, in their loftier flights, sometimes dared to speak to the "rights of man." But this Galilean debated the *rights of the soul*—and in these debates can be found the battle-cries of twenty centuries—the inspiration of

"The mighty hopes that make us men."

No other discourses have been so abiding

in their influence or have so moved the world. Before them ignorance and prejudice have waned; superstition has disappeared; idolatry has vanished; the asperities of hate and revenge have softened; tyranny and oppression have abdicated; slavery has manumitted its victims and vice released its prey.

Through their influence freedom has been established and civil liberty enthroned; hospitals have been builded and institutions of learning founded without number; woman has been emancipated and elevated and childhood rescued and succored.

In his finest efforts no orator of any nation or of any age has approached Him. He has inspired the eloquence of the best and greatest of all climes for nineteen hundred years. He is a part of all oratory to-day, just as He is a part of all literature, all story, all history and all song.

NEITHER POET NOR MUSICIAN

HE was not a poet or a musician. But for nineteen centuries He has inspired the world's great songs and the world's great music. In their sublimer, diviner efforts He has led the great poets and the great musicians into

"A light that never was by sea or land."

The rarest sonnets and the sublimest music mortal hands have penned or mortal ears have heard were written in His praise, in adoration of His name and in glorification of His cause. The finest instruments man has framed grow sentient and become tremulous with emotion, ineffable and masterful, when used in the interpretation of His mercy and compassion. And the most exquisite human voice that thrills the souls of men glides into a purer, sweeter tone,

reaches a sublimer melody, touches harmonies more glorious, and becomes regnant with mysterious, impelling power, when raised in Christian song or anthem to tell the story of His matchless, race-wide love.

He was not a musician, and yet but for Him the symphonies of Mozart, the melodies of Schubert and the harmonies of Beethoven would have found no expression; Mendelssohn's "Saint Paul" and his "Elijah," Haydn's "Creation," Handel's glorious "Messiah" and his yet more wondrous "Israel in Egypt" would have gone forever unvoiced and uncomposed. Through *Him* they were inspired and glorified. Through *them* He charmed and blessed the race anew.

He was not a poet; as we have already seen, not even an author of any kind. And yet but for Him and what He has inspired the world's libraries would contain but little

except blank and empty tomes. The wealth of literature which now enriches the world would not, could not be.

Neither Milton nor Pope would have spoken. Dante and Shakespeare would have remained dumb. Tennyson and Browning and Longfellow and Whittier would have found no voice and would have had no vision. Emerson and Carlyle, Bacon and Macaulay, and Hugo and Lowell would have left no message. Paul and Luther and John Wesley would have had no mission. Washington could not have founded or Lincoln have preserved this republic of the people. They all were the product of Christian institutions. The atmosphere created by the moral forces set in motion by His gospel made them possible.

The great Christian hymns would have remained unwritten, their tunes uncomposed. Perronet and Holden would not

have blessed the race in "Coronation," or Sarah Adams and Lowell Mason in "Nearer My God to Thee," or Augustus Toplady and Thomas Hastings in "Rock of Ages," or Watts and Woodbury in "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross," or Charles Wesley and Lowell Mason in "Jesus, Lover of My Soul," or Cardinal Newman and Doctor Dykes in "Lead, Kindly Light."

Without these and others whose souls have "caught fire" from Him we would have no Christian hymnology at all; no "Glorias;" no "Hallelujahs;" no Pæans of praise; no Te Deums of Thanksgiving; no Sonnets of Consecration; no Odes of Devotion. The race would be spiritually bankrupt.

There is no poem like the elegy of His sad life, no epic like the story of His tragic death, and the conquering glory of His after-triumph.

NOT AN ARTIST

HE was not an artist. He never painted a picture or carved a piece of statuary in all His life. He was a stranger to palette and to chisel. But the finest concept of the human mind ever caught by painter's brush, or by mortal hands transferred to canvas, was inspired by Him, and the rarest dream ever carved by mortal sculptor from Carrara marble had Him for its subject.

If He, and all that He has inspired, were taken out of the art galleries of the world, there would be little left of the work of the great masters, either old or new. The inspiration and the soul would be gone. Dead canvas and marble blocks alone would remain.

But for Him Raphael would have been visionless, Michael Angelo without genius;

Murillo, fameless. The life of Tissot would have been a disaster. Burne-Jones would not have been immortalized in the "Annunciation." Hoffman's "Christ in the Temple" would have found no canvas, and Hunt's "Light of the World" would have forever remained an unformed figment.

NOT AN ARCHITECT

HE was not an architect; not even a builder. He was only a Galilean carpenter—a maker of wooden plows and of ox-yokes. But in little more than nineteen centuries the world has been filled and enriched with a multitude of architectural forms of marvelous combination, wondrous beauty and massive grandeur, wrought out of the intellects and dreams of the most unrivaled architects of all time with a grace and skill and purity of style nowhere else expressed, dedicated to His name and consecrated to His worship.

Church, temple and cathedral—the Sistine Chapel in the Vatican, St. Denis' Cathedral in Paris, St. Sophia's in Constantinople, St. Marco's in Venice, St. Paul's in London, St. Peter's in Rome—attest the

draft He has made upon the architectural genius of the race.

In His name, for the glory of His cause, and for Him Pintelli and Giotto, Bramante, Maderno and Angelo, Gau and Sir Christopher Wren wrought their rarest concepts of form and combination, into façade and colonnade; into architrave and frieze; into atrium and arch; into column and pilaster; into pillar and balustrade; into chapel and cloister; into aisle and parapet; into choir and chancel; into pinnacle and cupola; into dome and campanile; into cathedra and altar; *and gave physical shape and substance to the colossal, wondrous children of their incomparable, unfettered souls.*

In His name, for the glory of His cause, and for Him, they builded these mighty triumphs of architecture; set the stamp of their inimitable genius on bended arch and

curved vault; gave them walls of alabaster; constellations of sapphires and of diamonds; streets of marble and skies of gold, and altars of molten gold inlaid with pearls.

No, this Galilean was not an architect, not even a builder. In the silent, obscure years in Galilee He built no house and planned no temple, but *He did build character, human masterpieces*—John and Peter and Paul—and set them like lighted torches along the shadowy pathway of mortal progress.

He possessed mysterious, unexampled creative power, the power to transform the soul, to lift it from the Earth unto the Heavens; to make the ignoble noble; the vulgar clean; the cruel gentle; the impure pure; the weak strong; the timid brave and the wavering steadfast.

The Sistine Chapel in the Vatican is marvelous, but the brain out of which it sprang

was more marvelous than the Sistine Chapel. St. Paul's in London is stupendous, but the soul that planned it was more stupendous than St. Paul's. St. Peter's in Rome is grandly great, but the genius of Michael Angelo was greater and grander than St. Peter's.

And just as Pintelli and Wren and Angelo were more wonderful, stupendous and greater than their creations, so this Master Builder of the ages is more wonderful, stupendous and greater than Pintelli, Wren or Angelo.

NOT A STATESMAN

HE was not a statesman. He never held or aspired to official position. He took no part in the politics of His time. His country was under the yoke of a foreign despotism, but He did not seek to change its government, to repeal its laws, or to administer its affairs. He did not try to put down its rulers, or even to expel its oppressors.

But He did crave dominion. Craved it as none has ever craved it. But the dominion He craved was not of *states* or of *men,* it was of *hearts* and of *lives.* He sought to establish a kingdom in which He, Himself, was to be supreme. But the kingdom He sought was not of Earth, it was of Heaven. And it was greater far than little Palestine. It included all lands and all peoples—a

spiritual kingdom, wide as the earth, as inclusive as the human race.

He did not seek the reins of temporal government in any of its departments—legislative, executive or judicial. *But He did seek to establish moral principles, to lay foundations that should abide and which should be deeper and wider than statutes and constitutions.* With Him "arrangements" and "compromises," or "nice and cunning devices" would not do. Of subterfuge and evasion He would have none. He knew God had decreed the changeless moral law that *"no question is ever settled until it is settled right,"* and that revolution and war would never end upon earth as long as Truth was on the scaffold and Error on the throne.

And so He sought to dethrone Error and to enthrone Truth; to give it an abiding place in the hearts and affections of men,

knowing well that *Truth once enthroned and established would reach and revolutionize not only the government and affairs of His own little land, but the government and affairs of all nations and of all lands.*

The great and privileged of His time called Him a *disturber.* They complained that He was agitating the people; that He would not let things alone; that existing conditions were good enough; that change was inexpedient; that the principles He advocated would be inconvenient; that they were revolutionary; that if established they would "hurt business;" that their very establishment meant turmoil and upheaval, and that the man who proposed them was a radical and a fanatic, and ought to be suppressed.

Scribe and Pharisee led in the cry and were loud in condemnation. The people were incited until they, too, turned against

Him. They upbraided and accused Him, and in the end they hurtled Him to crucifixion and to death. But He did not yield or waver. He stood unmoved, prizing Justice more than He valued Peace; loving Truth more than His own life. He continued to teach until the end, not officially or with ecclesiastical sanction, but by *individual right—the right of every man to speak the Truth to his fellows as God gives him to see the Truth.* He did not attempt to palliate. He sought foundation causes. He stripped sin of its veneer and left it exposed in ugly nakedness. He laid the ax at the root of the tree, knowing the price He would have to pay, and that for the hour He should fail. But immediate results He did not expect. *He was sowing century-seed.* Not mummy-seed, but century-seed,—seed that would live and grow, that would bloom and blossom and bear fruit, filling the earth with

its fragrance and feeding the hungry souls of generations of unborn men and women. He knew He could afford to wait; that in the long fight stretching through the centuries the Father's arm would be the strongest; *that the primacy of the moral would ultimately be established.*

And the ages have proved His faith. No statesman of any nation or of any age has so widely, so profoundly or so abidingly influenced the affairs of states or the destinies of nations, or so stirred the constructive genius of the race.

While it may not be said that man has fully accepted or adopted His principles, or attained His ideals, it can be said, and said with emphasis, that in spite of his own weakness and the confusion of forces about him, *he has blundered toward them for two thousand years; that he is still blundering toward them.* And this is warrant for the hope that

some day he will reach them, and make them his very own.

His code of ethics even now directs the conduct of the world's best statesmanship, and has made such progress in civilized countries that the statesman who refuses to be bound by its provisions can not hope for continued lease of power.

His precepts in some degree have become a part of the laws and the constitutions of all countries, and have taken such grip upon the mind of the race that the government which refuses to adopt them in some substantial measure has no assurance of peaceful existence. Such a government would soon find itself at war not only with the other nations of the world, but with its own people, and could not long abide the white light of this new century.

WITHOUT SIN

HE lived a sinless life. There was "no fault in Him," no moral defect, no spot of blame, no "freckle of the flesh." He was good incarnated; *the race's moral climax; its one God-touched man; the "Crystal Christ."* In integrity of soul He stands solitary and alone. History affords no compeer. There have been other great men but the most transcendent among them were sometimes strangely weak. None lived unblemished. The taint of sin is about the garments of all. The marks of the tumultuous passions of the flesh are upon them all.

But here is one who lived and died without the taint of wrong. One against whose moral worth no rumor, tattled even by an enemy, can be found.

And yet He knew temptation, knew it in

all its fascinating wiles, its corrupting power; knew it even as the troubled, passion-strained souls of mortals have never known it; knew it in the solitudes of the wilderness, in the streets of the city, on the mountain-top, and in the market-place; knew it in the silent watches of the night; in that mysterious struggle in Gethsemane; knew it in trial and scourge; knew it on all the pathway from Manger-birth to Calvary-exit.

And through it all He kept His moral integrity and lived and died without sin. Lived and died sinless and blameless, not by divine exemption, as men have sometimes thought, *but by His own moral decision, through the well-set purpose of His own inflexible soul, because His personality was greater than His environment.* Where we creep back, maimed and wounded, and sometimes spiritually dead, He returned

with the light of triumph in His eyes and a look of exalted beauty upon His face. His antagonism to temptation was so intense and pauseless, that for Him *there was no "fatal moment."* He taught the race a new truth, the great triumphant fact, *that there can be temptation with integrity and provocation without sin.*

SUMMARY

AND so we have Him, a Galilean carpenter:

Not a physician, but the master of all human ills;

Not a lawyer, but the expounder of the elemental principles of all law;

Not an author, but the inspirer of the living literature of the world;

Not an orator, but the interpreter of the universal human heart;

Not a poet or musician, but the soul and inspiration of all song and of all music;

Not an artist, but the unfailing light of the great masters, old and new;

Not an architect, but the soul-transformer and character-builder of all time;

Not a statesman, but the state and institution founder of the race.

And, more wonderful than all, a man *blameless and unscarred by sin or taint of wrong.*

CONCLUSION

BEFORE a mind like that, in the presence of such amazing intellectual powers and a character so faultless and so perfect, I am awed and humbled into humility.

Face to face with this lowly-born but transcendent and omniscient Jew, I find in Him enough of the marvelous and inexplicable to convince me of itself, of His superhumanness and divinity.

And when I contemplate the admitted facts of His wondrous life; His death on the Cross at three-and-thirty; the effects of His brief ministry and the results of His work, so vast, so far-reaching and so abiding, and consider His all-pervasive and omniscient personality, *my exultant soul slips its agnostic bonds, leaps the shrinking chasm of its*

doubt, breaks through every hindering quibble, falls at His nail-pierced feet, and in glad recognition cries out its joy:

"MY LORD AND SAVIOR, JESUS CHRIST!"

He was not a man. He is Deity itself, God made manifest.

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